



Washington State Commission on

Asian Pacific American Affairs

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E-Legislative Update

February 28 – March 6, 2011



We are in the eighth week of the legislative session. At this time, there are fewer public hearings on bills. However, you still have an opportunity to testify on a bill. If you cannot appear before a committee, [contact your legislator](#) making your position on a bill known. You can do so by writing a letter, sending an e-mail, calling the legislator's Olympia office, or by calling the Legislative Hotline at 1-800-562-6000.

Because the state budget is an overarching issue, the Commission on Asian Pacific American Affairs will provide updates on important milestones in budget development as well as focus on bills that impact the Asian American and Pacific Islander community in the areas of education, health care, human services, economic development, and immigration. To learn more about the current budget, you can attend the House Ways & Means and Senate Finance committee hearings.

The Commission on Asian Pacific American Affairs will be providing information weekly through our e-legislative update and website on committee hearings, bills, and other events of interest throughout the legislative session. Our e-legislative update provides a general overview highlighting a few bills of interest to the community while our website hosts a more extensive list of bills utilizing a [bill tracking](#) feature for those community members seeking more information. Highlights from the previous week can be viewed on [TVW's](#) Legislative Review.

You may also access our [policy briefing papers](#) which examine issues facing the Asian American and Pacific Islander community. This week's [featured brief](#) is on "*The Achievement Gap for Asian American and Pacific Islander Students*."

Special Highlights: At center stage is the state budget, with a deficit of up to 500 million remaining for the 2011 budget, and a projected deficit of over 5 billion for the 2011-2013 biennial budget. To put the size of these cuts in perspective, closing all community and technical colleges would save the state only 1.4 billion, and eliminating all state funding for WSU and UW would save the state only 1 billion.

The following budget items support a large number of communities of color, immigrants, and refugees in Washington State. Many of these items experienced cuts in the supplemental budget. Because the state budget deficit is not expected to decrease, the legislature is considering additional reductions in funding or elimination of some of these programs as it develops the 2011-2013 budget. A proposed 2011-2013 budget is expected after the March 17th revenue forecast.

- Apple Health for Kids, administered by the Department of Social and Health Services, is a health insurance program for children of low income families. The supplemental budget reduced funding for this program by \$360,000. Undocumented children and children between 200-300% of the federal poverty level will not be eligible for federal match and will be required to pay higher monthly premiums.
- The Basic Health Plan administered by the Health Care Authority provides affordable insurance coverage for low income people who do not have access to health care through employment or who do not qualify for medicaid or medicare. The supplemental budget decreased funding by 9.3 million dollars. About 17,000 people will lose coverage beginning March 1st, including persons over 133% of the federal poverty level and most non-citizens.
- Community Health Clinic Grants support clinics that provide medical and dental care to patients who are at or below 200% of the federal poverty level and to patients who have no other health care coverage such as Medicaid or the Basic Health Plan. The supplemental budget cut funding for this program by 5.3 million dollars.
- State Food Assistance Program, administered by the Department of Social and Health Services, provides food stamps for low-income families. The supplemental budget reduces the funding for the program by 4.8 million dollars which is half of the program's current funding.
- I-BEST, Integrated Basic Education and Skills Training program, offered at community and technical colleges, provides workforce training for students in English as a Second Language or in Adult Basic Education courses. This program gives students literacy and workplace skills at the same time. The supplemental budget did not eliminate this program.
- Limited English Proficiency (LEP) Pathway Employment Services provides immigrants employment placement assistance, English as a Second Language training, job skills training, job search workshops, and job retention services. The supplemental budget decreases funding by 1.5 million, cutting the program's funding by half.
- Medicaid Interpreter Services, administered by the Department of Social and Health Services, supports medical providers in communicating with Medicaid clients, required under federal civil rights laws. The supplemental budget did not eliminate this program. A legislative workgroup is currently looking at ways to find cost savings.
- Naturalization Program, administered by the Department of Social and Health Services, provides services that prepare low-income refugees and legal immigrants for U.S. citizenship testing. The supplemental budget cuts funding for this program by about 1 million dollars.
- Opportunity Grants for 1st generation college students provide eligible students in community and technical colleges with academic and financial support for GED, Adult Basic Education, Adult High School Completion or English as a Second Language students if they are interested in training for employment in high wage, high demand industries, such as health care, computer electronics, early childhood education, and construction. The supplemental budget did not cut this program.

Below are some scheduled meetings and hearings that might be of interest to you.

Education

Higher Education

3/2/11 8:00 am

House Full Committee

House Hearing Rm D
John L. O'Brien Building
Olympia, WA

Work Session: Innovations in Higher Education.

Public Hearing:

1. [HB 1816](#) - Concerning funding and operating practices of the state higher education system.

Education

3/3/11 8:00 am

House Full Committee
House Hearing Rm A
John L. O'Brien Building
Olympia, WA

Work Session:

1. Education Data.
 - a. K-12 Data Governance Group: Final Report.
 - b. OFM Education Research & Data Center: Update on Longitudinal Student Data System.
2. Science, Technology, Engineering, & Mathematics (STEM).
 - a. STEM Comprehensive Plan.
 - b. Pacific Science Center.
 - c. Washington State Leadership and Assistance for Science Education Reform (LASER).
 - d. Middle School STEM Initiatives.

Information is current as of: February 24, 2011.

To find out more information on a particular bill, please visit <http://www.leg.wa.gov>.

CAPAA was established by the state legislature in 1974 to improve the well-being of Asian Pacific Americans (APAs) by insuring their access to participation in the fields of government, business, education, and other areas. It has a board made up of 12-governor appointed members that represent the diverse APA communities of Washington State.

To receive more electronic updates, visit us at <http://www.capaa.wa.gov>. To unsubscribe, [click here](#).